

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 104912

R 291209Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7822

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 16835

EXDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, TH

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PRIME MINISTER

1. I SAW PRIME MINISTER SANYA OCTOBER 29 FOR WHAT WAS BILLED AS A FAREWELL CALL BUT WHICH DEVELOPED INTO A SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION LASTING NEARLY AN HOUR AND A HALF. FOREIGN MINISTER CHARUNPHAN AND PRESS SPOKESMAN NISSAI WERE ALSO PRESENT ON THAI SIDE, AND I WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DCM. AT OUTSET I PASSED TO SANYA A COPY OF THE PRESIDENT'S CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE (STATE 207360) WHICH SANYA HAD NOT YET SEEN THROUGH HIS OWN CHANNELS. MESSAGE WAS DELIVERED TO FOREIGN MINISTRY TEN DAYS AGO; FAILURE TO REACH PRIME MINISTER POINTS UP FACT THAT GOVERNMENT MACHINERY HAS NOT YET SHAKEN DOWN FOLLOWING RECENT UPHEAVAL.

2. I TOLD SANYA THAT PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE INDICATED, AND I WISHED ALSO TO REAFFIRM, THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO HELP HIS GOVERNMENT WITHIN OUR CAPABILITIES IN WAYS WHICH HE DESIRED. I NOTED THAT WE HAD CLOSE RELATIONS WITH FORMER GOVERNMENT OVER MANY YEARS, THAT WE SHARED MANY INTERESTS AND OBJECTIVES IN COMMON AND THAT WE EXPECTED THIS CLOSE RELATIONSHIP TO CONTINUE. WE HOPED, LIKE MANY THAI, THAT REAL OPPORTUNITIES WILL OPEN UP NOW, IN SPITE OF DIFFICULTIES, AND THAT PROGRESS IN HERETOFORE SOMEWHAT NEGLECTED

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FIELDS MIGHT NOW BECOME POSSIBLE. I REITERATED THAT WE WERE AVAILABLE TO HELP IF THE PRIME MINISTER CALLED UPON US. PRIME MINISTER EXPRESSED HIS DEEP APPRECIATION FOR PRESIDENT'S WARM MESSAGE AND FOR OUR ASSURANCES.

3. I THEN TOOK ADVANTAGE OF MEETING WITH SANYA TO BRIEF HIM AND SOLICIT HIS VIEWS ON SEVERAL MATTERS OF IMPORTANCE TO BOTH GOVERNMENTS:

(A) U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE. I OUTLINED FOR SANYA PROCEDURES WE HAVE FOLLOWED IN THE PAST IN INSURING COORDINATION BETWEEN TWO GOVERNMENTS ON MATTERS AFFECTING U.S. MILITARY. AFTER NOTING REDUCTIONS WHICH HAVE ALREADY BEEN MADE, I REFERRED TO MY DISCUSSION WITH FONMIN CHARUNPHAN IN WHICH HE HAD MENTIONED DESIRABILITY OF CONTINUING OUR BILATERAL TALKS ON U.S. PRESENCE. CHARUNPHAN TOLD SANYA THE GOVERNMENT WAS BEING ASKED BY THE PRESS ABOUT "CESSATION OF THE TALKS" AND FELT IT WAS IMPORTANT TO KEEP THE TALKS GOING. I AGREED AND SUGGESTED, AS IN MY EARLIER DISCUSSION WITH CHARUNPHAN (BANGKOK 16737 AND 16751), THAT THESE BE CONTINUED, AT LEAST FOR THE PRESENT, IN MILITARY CHANNELS. I URGED THAT ON FURTHER WITHDRAWALS WE HANDLE THE MATTER CAREFULLY TO AVOID GIVING THE WRONG SIGNAL TO HANOI AT THIS CRITICAL TIME. WE BELIEVE IT WOULD NOT BE IN EITHER OF OUR INTERESTS TO ACT IN SUCH A WAY AS TO WEAKEN THE DETERRENT AFFECT OUR FORCES IN THAILAND NOW REPRESENT OR TO LESSEN PRESSURES ON HANOI TO ABIDE BY THE AGREEMENTS ON INDOCHINA. I NOTED NEVERTHELESS THAT WE WERE FULLY PREPARED TO CONTINUE BILATERAL DISCUSSIONS ON MATTERS AFFECTING THE US PRESENCE AND HAD NO OBJECTION TO PUBLIC ACKNOWLEDGEMENT THAT THESE TALKS ARE TAKING PLACE. SANYA MADE NO SUBSTANTIVE COMMENT ON THE MERITS OF US REDUCTIONS BUT CONCURRED IN FOLLOWING OUR EARLIER PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING THESE DISCUSSIONS. (COMMENT: I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE WE WILL HAVE NO SERIOUS TROUBLE ON THIS FOR NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS.)

(B) NARCOTICS. I OUTLINED BRIEFLY US-THAI COOPERATION TO END THE PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING IN DANGEROUS DRUGS AND SAID THAT WE HOPED TO CONTINUE THIS COOPERATION, MENTIONING THAT CARAVANS, TRAWLERS, ETC. CONTINUE TO MOVE THE DRUGS IN SERIOUS QUANTITIES. WE WILL CONTINUE TO WORK WITH RTG OFFICIALS AND SUPPORT RTG EFFORTS. SANYA INDICATED HIS GENERAL AWARENESS OF JOINT US-THAI EFFORTS AND REFERRED FAVORABLY TO RECENT STATEMENTS BY TOP THAI POLICE OFFICIALS

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ON THE NEED TO STOP THIS TRAFFIC. I THEN REFERRED TO COLONEL PRAMUAL, WHO IS NOW SERVING 25 YEARS FOR PROTECTING NARCOTICS' TRAFFICKERS, AND WHO HAS LAUNCHED A CAMPAIGN IN THE PRESS TO CREATE THE IMPRESSION THAT HE IS INNOCENT OF ANY WRONGDOING AND THAT THE MAJOR RESPONSIBILITY FOR NARCOTICS' TRAFFICKING IN THAILAND RESTS WITH PRAPHAT AND NARONG. I SAID THAT WHILE I DID NOT WISH TO PASS JUDGMENT ON HIS ACCUSATIONS AGAINST FORMER THAI LEADERS, WE HAD NO DOUBT WHATSOEVER THAT PRAMUAL HIMSELF WAS IN FACT GUILTY OF PROTECTING TRAFFICKERS.

(C) THAI VOLUNTEERS IN LAOS. I THEN BRIEFLY OUTLINED THE NATURE OF THE SGU PROGRAM IN LAOS, NOTING THAT THERE WERE STILL SOMEWHAT MORE THAN 9,000 THAI VOLUNTEERS IN LAOS AT THIS TIME. OUR VIEW IS

THAT THESE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED GRADUALLY AS WE GAIN EVIDENCE THAT THE CEASEFIRE IS WORKING AND, ONCE THE NEW GOVERNMENT IS SET UP, THAT NORTH VIETNAM IS PULLING ITS FORCES OUT OF LAOS. I NOTED THAT WE HAVE WORKED CLOSELY ON THIS PROGRAM WITH GENERAL SURAKIJ, THE NEW DEPUTY MINISTER OF DEFENCE, AND THAT SURAKIJ HAS IN MIND RETAINING THE VOLUNTEERS WHO HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN FROM LAOS IN AREAS ALONG THE THAI/LAO BORDER FOR TRAINING FOR A TIME AFTER THEY ARE WITHDRAWN TO KEEP THEM IN A STATE OF READINESS. I TOLD SANYA THAT WE WOULD BE ABLE TO SUPPORT THESE FORCES EITHER IN LAOS OR THAILAND ON A DECLINING SCALE UNTIL THE END OF OUR CURRENT FISCAL YEAR BUT EMPHASIZED THAT WE WERE PROHIBITED BY LAW FROM SUPPORTING THEM IN COMBAT ACTIVITY IN THAILAND.

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ACTION SS-30

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /031 W

----- 105181

R 291209Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7823

INFO AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 16835

EXDIS

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

(D) U.S. AID. I TOLD SANYA THAT WE HAD BRIEFED THE PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT ON THE DIFFICULTIES WE FACED WITH THE CONGRESS IN OBTAINING FUNDS FOR MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID. THOSE DIFFICULTIES PERSIST, BUT WE INTEND TO CONTINUE OUR AID TO HIS GOVERNMENT WITHIN OUR LIMITATIONS. THE PRIME MINISTER'S POLICY STATEMENT OPENS POSSIBILITIES FOR COOPERATION IN AREAS IN WHICH LITTLE WAS DONE BEFORE. UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE USEFUL FOR BOTH THE U.S. AND THAI SIDES TO TAKE ANOTHER LOOK AT OUR ECONOMIC AID PROGRAM TO CONFIRM THAT IT IS POINTED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION AND I NOTED THAT IT IS OPPORTUNE THAT USOM HAS A NEW DIRECTOR TO UNDERTAKE THIS. OUR RESOURCES ARE LIMITED, AND WE MUST USE WHAT WE HAVE TO BEST ADVANTAGE. I SUGGESTED THAT WE ALSO TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT OUR MILITARY AID PROGRAM TO BE SURE THAT IT WAS BEING USED TO MAXIMUM EXTENT TO HELP DEVELOP THAI SELF-SUFFICIENCY AND TO MEET THAILAND'S REAL SECURITY NEEDS. I SAID I WOULD ASK JUSMAAG CHIEF GENERAL MELLEN TO GO OVER THIS WITH HIS THAI COUNTERPARTS.

(E) FOREIGN INVESTMENT. REFERRING TO THE LARGE AMOUNT OF FOREIGN INVESTMENT ENVISAGED UNDER THAILAND'S THIRD 5-YEAR PLAN, I SAID THAT WHILE U.S. INVESTORS WERE INTERESTED AND WANTED TO PARTICIPATE THEY WERE CONCERNED OVER UNCERTAINTIES. SANYA INTERRUPTED TO INDICATE HIS AWARENESS OF PROBLEMS WHICH HAD ARISEN BECAUSE OF THE SECRET

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ALIEN BUSINESS DECREE (ABD). I SAID THAT IF U.S. INVESTORS COULD NOT GET CLEAR ANSWERS AS TO JUST HOW THE ABD AND OTHER MEASURES APPLIED TO THEM, THEY WOULD GO ELSEWHERE. SANYA AGREED UND SAID HIS GOVERNMENT WAS ALREADY STUDYING THIS MATTER.

(F) THANOM. AS WE WERE BREAKING UP, I BRIEFED SANYA ON THE RECENT STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THANOM IN BOSTON (STATE 212579 AND 212611). SANYA EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION FOR MEASURES WE WERE TAKING TO PREVENT SERIOUS INCIDENTS.

4. FOR HIS PART, SANYA TOOK ADVANTAGE OF OUR MEETING TO SEEK ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON THE SITUATIONS IN LAOS AND CAMBODIA. IN RESPONSE TO HIS REQUEST, I BRIEFED SANYA IN GENERAL TERMS ON OUR VIEW OF THE CURRENT SITUATION IN LAOS WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO HANOI'S INTENTIONS AND PROSPECTS FOR THE NEW GOVERNMENT. SANYA PROBED REGARDING THE MAJOR PARTICIPANTS ON THE LAO POLITICAL SCENE, PARTICULARLY SISOUK AND THE INVLUENCE OF BOON OUM. I TOLD SANYA THAT IN OUR VIEW SOUVANNA PHOUMA WAS THE KEY TO STABILITY IN LAOS AND WE FELT HE WOULD BE ABLE T HOLD THINGS TOGETHR. AFTER HE PASSES FROM THE SCENE PROSPECTS WERE LESS CLEAR SINCE THERE WAS NO OBVIOUS SUCCESSOR. CHARUNPHAN NOTED THAT SOUVANNA PHOUMA HAD ASKED THAILAND TO KEEP PHOUMI AND HIS FOLLOWERS IN CHECK TO PREVENT A REPETITION OF THE RECENT ABORTIVE COUP. HE NOTED, AND SANYA AGREED, THAT THAILAND WOULD HAVE TO KEEP CLOSE WATCH ON THESE ELEMENTS TO PREVENT DIFFICULTY FOR THE SOUVANNA GOVERNMENT.

5. ASKED ABOUT CAMBODIA, I NOTED THAT THE GKR HAS DONE FAR BETTER SINCE AUGUST 15 THAN MANY OBSERVERS EXPECTED. WHILE ROUTES 4 AND 5 HAVE BEEN CLOSED OFF AND ON VOR VARYING PERIODS, THE GOVERNMENT HAS DEFENDED KAMPONG CHAM EFFECTIVELY AND KEPT THE MEKONG OPEN AND HAS BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN SUPPLIES BY THIS ROUTE. ASKED FOR OUR VIEWS OF THE FUTURE, I MENTIONED THE LIKELIHOOD OF RENEWED INSURGENT PRESSURES IN THE DRY SEASON. WE HOPED A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT COULD BE WORKED OUT IN DUE COURSE AMONG THE PRESENT GKR AND VARIOUS INSURGENT GROUPS. THERE WAS MUCH DISCUSSION OF SIHANOUK WHOSE RECENT PRONOUNCEMENTS HAVE BAFFLED US ALL.

6. COMMENT: DURING THIS MEETING SANYA WAS RELAXED AND FRIENDLY AS HE HAS ALWAYS BEEN OVER THE MANY YEARS I HAVE KNOWN HIM. HE WAS WELL INFORMED ON SOME OF THE MATTERS WE DISCUSSED--LAOS AND SECRET

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CAMBODIA, FOR EXAMPLE, WHICH I ASSUME HE HAS DISCUSSED PERIOD-  
ICALLY WITH THE KING--BUT HE IS OBVIOUSLY NOT INFORMED ON MANY  
DETAILS OF RTG OPERATIONS. HOWEVER, HE APPEARS TO BE LEARNING  
FAST, AND I WAS IMPRESSED WITH HIS GRASP OF THINGS CONSIDERING  
THE FACT HE HAS BEEN IN OFFICE LESS THAN TWO WEEKS. IN GENERAL,  
SANYA PROJECTED AN IMAGE OF QUIET SELF-ASSURANCE AND CONFIDENCE.  
HE HAS A SHARP MIND AND GOT QUICKLY TO THE HEART OF THE MATTERS  
WE WERE DISCUSSING. WHILE THE PROBLEMS HE FACES ARE GREAT, I AM  
ALL THE MORE CONVINCED THAT HE HAS AS GOOD A CHANCE AS ANYONE, AND  
A BETTER CHANCE THAN MOST POSSIBLE THAI LEADERS, TO HEAL THE  
WOUNDS RESULTING FROM THE RECENT UPHEAVAL. WHETHER HE WILL BE ABLE  
TO MOBILIZE THAI RESOURCES FOR A MORE EFFECTIVE ATTACK ON THE  
NATION'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PROBLEMS REMAINS TO BE SEEN.  
UNGER

SECRET

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** Z  
**Capture Date:** 11 MAY 1999  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRIME MINISTER, FOREIGN RELATIONS, NARCOTICS, AMBASSADORS, VISITS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 29 OCT 1973  
**Decaption Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Decaption Note:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** golinofr  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1973BANGKO16835  
**Document Source:** ADS  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** 11652 GDS  
**Errors:** n/a  
**Film Number:** P750014-1479  
**From:** BANGKOK  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ACTION SS  
**Original Classification:** SECRET  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 5  
**Previous Channel Indicators:**  
**Previous Classification:** SECRET  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** EXDIS  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** golinofr  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 20 NOV 2001  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <20-Nov-2001 by kelleyw0>; APPROVED <21-Dec-2001 by golinofr>  
**Review Markings:**

Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
30 JUN 2005

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** AMBASSADOR'S CALL ON PRIME MINISTER  
**TAGS:** PFOR, SNAR, TH, (SANYA)  
**To:** STATE INFO PHNOM PENH  
VIENTIANE  
CINCPAC  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005